

# Traffic Safety Facts

## Crash • Stats

DOT HS 810 779

A Brief Statistical Summary

May 2007

# Drivers 65 and Older Have Lower Involvement Rates in Fatal Crashes

Drivers 65 and older consistently had lower involvement rates (per 100,000 licensed drivers) in fatal crashes when compared to adult drivers 21 to 64 years old (average involvement rates over five years of 22.2 and 27.7 per 100,000, respectively). Table 1 below depicts drivers involved, licensed drivers, population, and involvement rates by age groups for the

past five years. While the number of drivers 21 to 64 years old involved in fatal crashes rose 5.2 percent between 2001 and 2005, the number of drivers involved 65 and older has declined by 3.6 percent for the same time period. In fact the number of drivers 65 and older involved has declined over the past two years.

**Table 1 Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Age, Year, and Crash Involvement Rate**

Driver Age, Drivers Involved, Population, Licensed Drivers, and Involvement Rate	Calendar Year					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
<b>21-64</b>	<b>Drivers Involved</b>	41,942	42,423	43,096	43,158	44,103
	<b>Population</b>	164,851,817	167,269,967	169,538,038	171,709,307	173,699,992
	<b>Licensed Drivers</b>	151,109,591	153,608,635	155,119,721	157,402,782	158,708,539
	<b>Rate *</b>	27.8	27.6	27.8	27.4	27.8
<b>65 +</b>	<b>Drivers Involved</b>	6,446	6,323	6,445	6,239	6,215
	<b>Population</b>	35,329,850	35,588,891	35,952,389	36,333,025	36,790,113
	<b>Licensed Drivers</b>	27,572,774	28,453,131	28,604,307	28,976,217	29,383,823
	<b>Rate *</b>	23.4	22.2	22.5	21.5	21.2

Source: NCSA, FARS 2001-2004 (Final), 2005 (ARF), Licensed Drivers – FHWA, Population – Census Bureau  
\* Drivers involved per 100,000 licensed drivers

The population of people 21 to 64 has increased by 5.4 percent since 2001, whereas the population of people 65 and older has increased by 4.1 percent. A different trend is seen among licensed drivers. The number of licensed drivers 21 to 64 has increased by 5 percent, which is less than the 5.4-percent population increase. On the other hand the number of licensed drivers 65 and older has increased by 6.6 percent, which is much larger than the 4.1-percent population change seen among this age group. These opposing trends have led to the proportion of people 65 and older with driver licenses

increasing from 78.0 percent in 2001 to 79.9 percent of the resident population in 2005, whereas the proportion of people 21 to 64 with driver licenses has remained flat, changing from 91.7 percent to 91.4 percent.

Table 2 overleaf shows drivers 65 and older involved in fatal crashes by State, year, and involvement rate per 100,000 licensed drivers. The involvement rates vary widely across the States. In 2005, Rhode Island had the lowest rate (7.9) and Wyoming had the highest rate (45.8).

**Table 2 Drivers 65 and Older Involved in Fatal Crashes by State, Year, and Involvement Rate\***

State	2001		2002		Year 2003		2004		2005	
	Drivers	Rate*	Drivers	Rate*	Drivers	Rate*	Drivers	Rate*	Drivers	Rate*
Alabama	149	26.6	134	23.6	122	21.1	158	26.7	156	25.8
Alaska	9	28.1	9	26.0	10	27.3	11	29.9	6	16.3
Arizona	120	22.7	162	30.2	168	29.1	143	25.5	140	24.5
Arkansas	90	27.2	82	25.1	90	26.6	100	31.6	100	29.2
California	451	17.6	460	17.3	527	19.6	477	17.7	459	16.7
Colorado	80	21.0	85	22.7	70	18.8	81	20.4	76	18.3
Connecticut	48	9.9	50	10.3	39	8.4	39	8.1	42	8.4
Delaware	21	24.3	15	17.0	25	27.2	32	45.3	22	31.2
Dist of Columbia	3	9.1	3	8.6	1	2.7	1	2.6	5	12.9
Florida	613	25.0	584	23.5	562	22.8	554	22.4	563	22.7
Georgia	245	37.9	228	34.2	229	35.9	265	37.7	267	37.1
Hawaii	13	12.7	18	16.8	13	11.8	15	13.3	11	9.6
Idaho	48	38.6	41	31.9	44	33.3	38	28.2	43	30.6
Illinois	226	21.4	212	18.8	243	21.3	189	16.6	222	20.6
Indiana	160	30.5	131	18.0	133	18.9	146	19.9	139	18.9
Iowa	93	27.7	68	20.0	89	26.1	80	22.6	88	24.7
Kansas	90	30.6	78	26.0	77	25.0	72	23.4	69	22.3
Kentucky	119	29.3	151	39.2	150	38.1	124	31.1	148	36.1
Louisiana	115	30.2	120	21.2	113	22.3	94	17.0	88	19.3
Maine	44	30.0	43	28.9	50	34.1	34	22.0	30	18.8
Maryland	101	22.2	103	21.7	98	21.2	96	20.5	91	19.0
Massachusetts	71	10.5	72	10.6	93	13.8	63	9.4	70	10.5
Michigan	244	24.3	221	21.7	229	22.1	201	19.2	187	17.8
Minnesota	100	21.3	109	22.9	99	20.3	106	21.4	80	16.0
Mississippi	126	47.5	131	49.3	122	44.8	119	43.3	119	40.3
Missouri	175	29.6	183	30.4	197	32.5	154	25.0	183	28.8
Montana	29	28.2	42	39.9	34	31.9	32	29.6	32	29.2
Nebraska	43	21.9	45	22.7	45	21.6	48	23.0	41	19.6
Nevada	50	26.5	36	18.4	39	19.1	65	30.6	65	29.3
New Hampshire	36	29.3	20	16.1	20	15.9	26	20.0	33	25.4
New Jersey	139	15.3	149	16.7	125	14.4	126	14.1	119	12.7
New Mexico	54	32.2	38	23.4	43	28.7	61	33.8	49	26.2
New York	247	15.0	226	13.9	247	15.0	269	16.5	231	14.6
North Carolina	237	30.2	235	29.8	265	33.2	256	30.7	219	25.1
North Dakota	15	19.5	22	29.0	21	27.4	25	32.3	19	24.3
Ohio	221	18.2	241	19.7	196	16.2	205	16.6	215	16.9
Oklahoma	106	28.9	120	31.8	107	27.9	107	27.3	121	30.8
Oregon	95	25.3	86	22.6	83	21.5	71	18.0	92	22.6
Pennsylvania	279	19.8	281	19.4	279	19.2	260	18.1	294	20.3
Rhode Island	16	15.0	15	13.4	21	18.7	14	12.4	9	7.9
South Carolina	127	31.0	151	32.6	140	30.3	124	28.6	155	33.9
South Dakota	31	33.3	29	31.3	22	23.2	23	23.7	25	25.4
Tennessee	166	26.4	172	27.1	182	29.5	158	25.2	194	29.2
Texas	477	29.9	445	27.5	449	26.7	466	26.2	413	22.9
Utah	44	26.8	37	22.3	36	21.0	35	19.8	38	21.0
Vermont	18	22.5	16	18.8	9	10.0	12	12.8	11	11.6
Virginia	177	28.5	126	19.7	176	27.1	166	24.9	150	22.5
Washington	80	14.8	86	15.5	104	17.8	86	14.4	82	12.8
West Virginia	59	23.6	67	25.9	60	20.9	59	28.6	59	24.3
Wisconsin	119	22.1	129	23.3	132	23.4	142	24.6	119	19.6
Wyoming	27	48.0	16	26.0	17	30.3	11	19.7	26	45.8
National	6,446	23.4	6,323	22.2	6,445	22.5	6,239	21.5	6,215	21.2
Puerto Rico	34	**	28	**	34	**	33	**	35	**

Source: NCSA, FARS 2001-2004 (Final) and 2005 (ARF), Licensed Drivers – FHWA

\* Per 100,000 licensed drivers  
 \*\* Licensed driver data not available



For more information regarding the above reported data, contact NCSA at 202-366-4198. This issue of Crash•Stats and other general information on highway traffic safety may be accessed by Internet users at [www.nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CMSWeb/index.aspx](http://www.nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CMSWeb/index.aspx)